

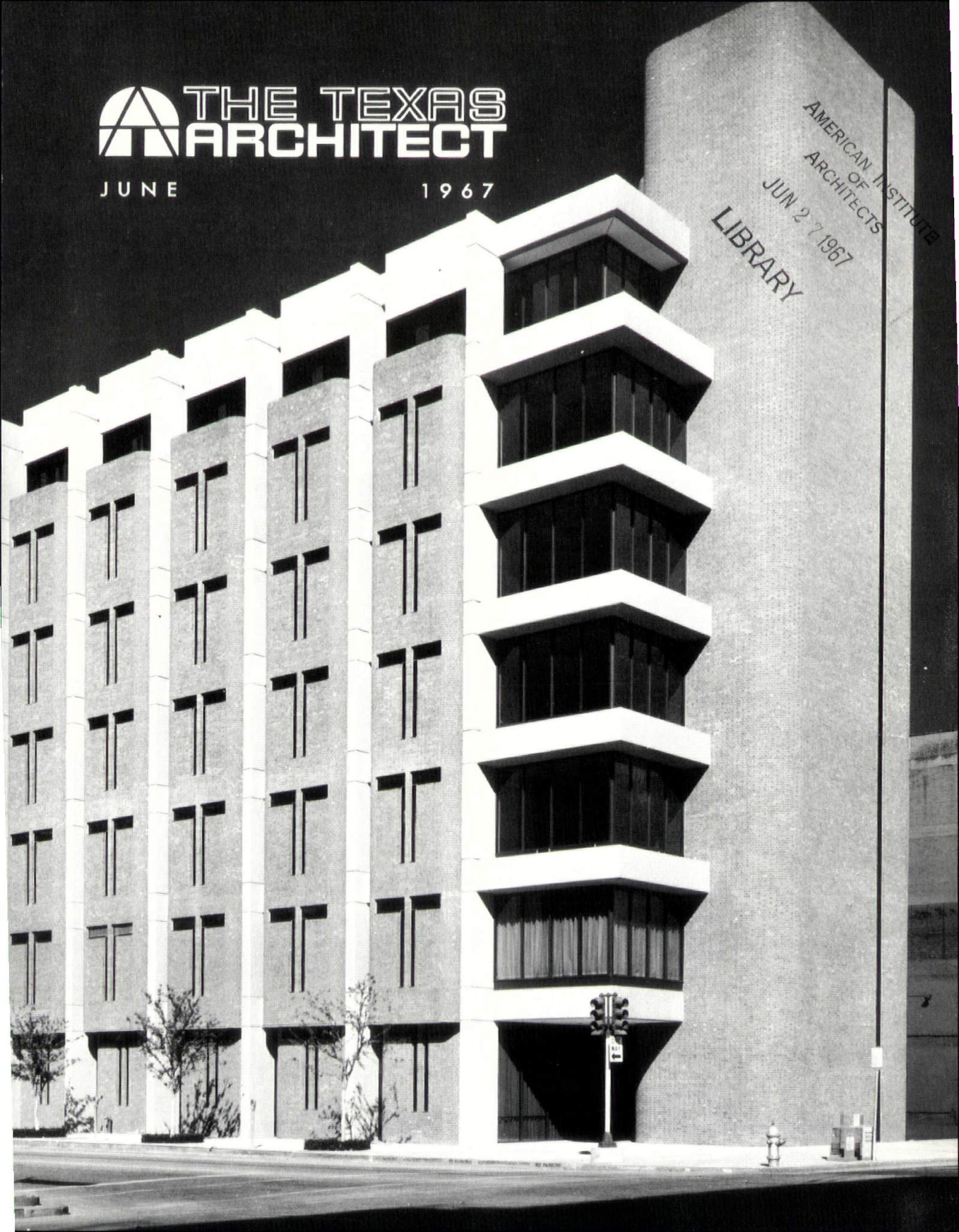


THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

JUNE

1967

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James D. Pfluger, Editor
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THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

VOLUME 17 / JUNE 1967 / NUMBER 6

The Press and the Elusive Issues of Beauty

So many noble causes run their courses as lost causes, and are regarded with some dubiousness even by those who are not against them, that it is just nice to be associated for once with a cause that is universally popular. Some things in this world command unquestioning esteem. Probably at the top of the list that we could all agree on is Motherhood. Certainly very close to the top, if not tied for first position, would be Beauty.

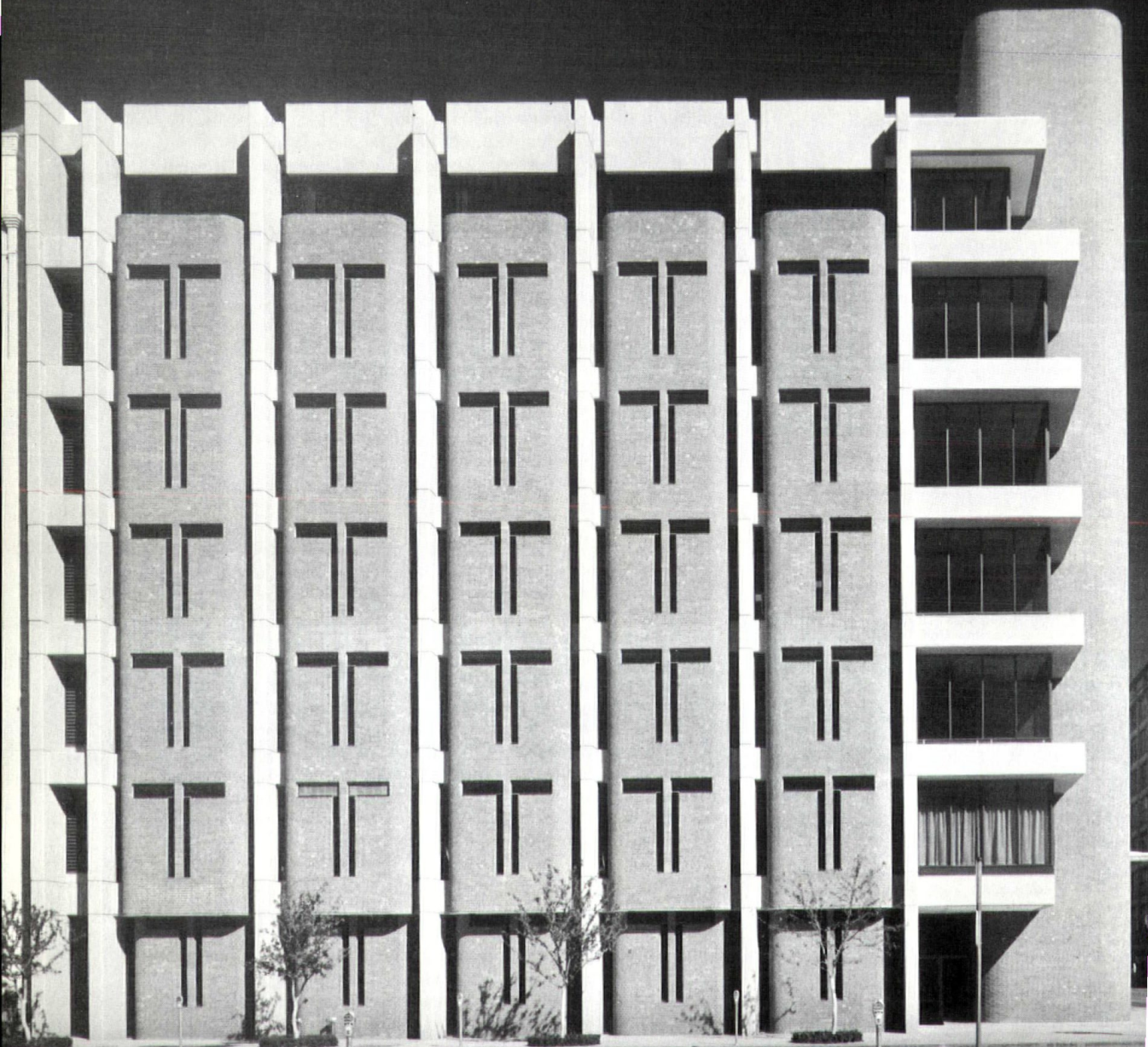
Who would declare himself against Beauty? To do so would amount to a declaration for the antithesis of Beauty, which as we know so well is Ugliness. If it is true that every person in this room is in favor of Beauty, and if we may consider it unlikely that a man-on-the-street poll in downtown Austin would record any opposition to Beauty, and if this could be regarded as typical of the expected outcome of other polls that might be made in other places, then what is there for us to talk about and why are we not, wherever we are, constantly in the midst of Beauty?

We have always before been able to escape from the evidence of our sins. The structure of the urban community, with its expanding perimeters steadily engulfing the landscape and its abandonment of huge intown areas to blight, has developed very much in the frontier traditions of moving in, exploiting, wasting and moving on. We have chopped, dynamited, dammed, plowed, sawed, hammered, shot and bulldozed our way across the continent. Nature was the force to be overcome, and we have overcome. Our settlements and cities have squandered space as though it were inexhaustible. Now we are obliged to turn back, to behold our mess in all its dismal complexity, and to make creative use of that which we have so flagrantly abused and taken for granted. The growing urban centers now challenge us to equal the audacity and inventiveness of what the pioneers did with their bare hands in feats appropriate to the present need—feats of the aspiring imagination.

We yearn for a more widely and deeply felt sharing of the spirit of gratitude, to our society for having so well maintained a principle of humane human relationships, and to the abundant land that has supported us so comfortably. Without being interested in nationalism in its narrow and outworn implications, we wish for devotion to our country as a place and as an idea, and for the object of this devotion to display a loved and well-cared-for look. If we really love our country even more than we love the products of its bounty, the physical features of the country will show it. It must be love.

GEORGE McCUE
Editorial Staff,
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

(excerpt from Proceedings of Texas Conference on Our Environmental Crises available from School of Architecture, University of Texas)



SOUTHWEST BUILDING

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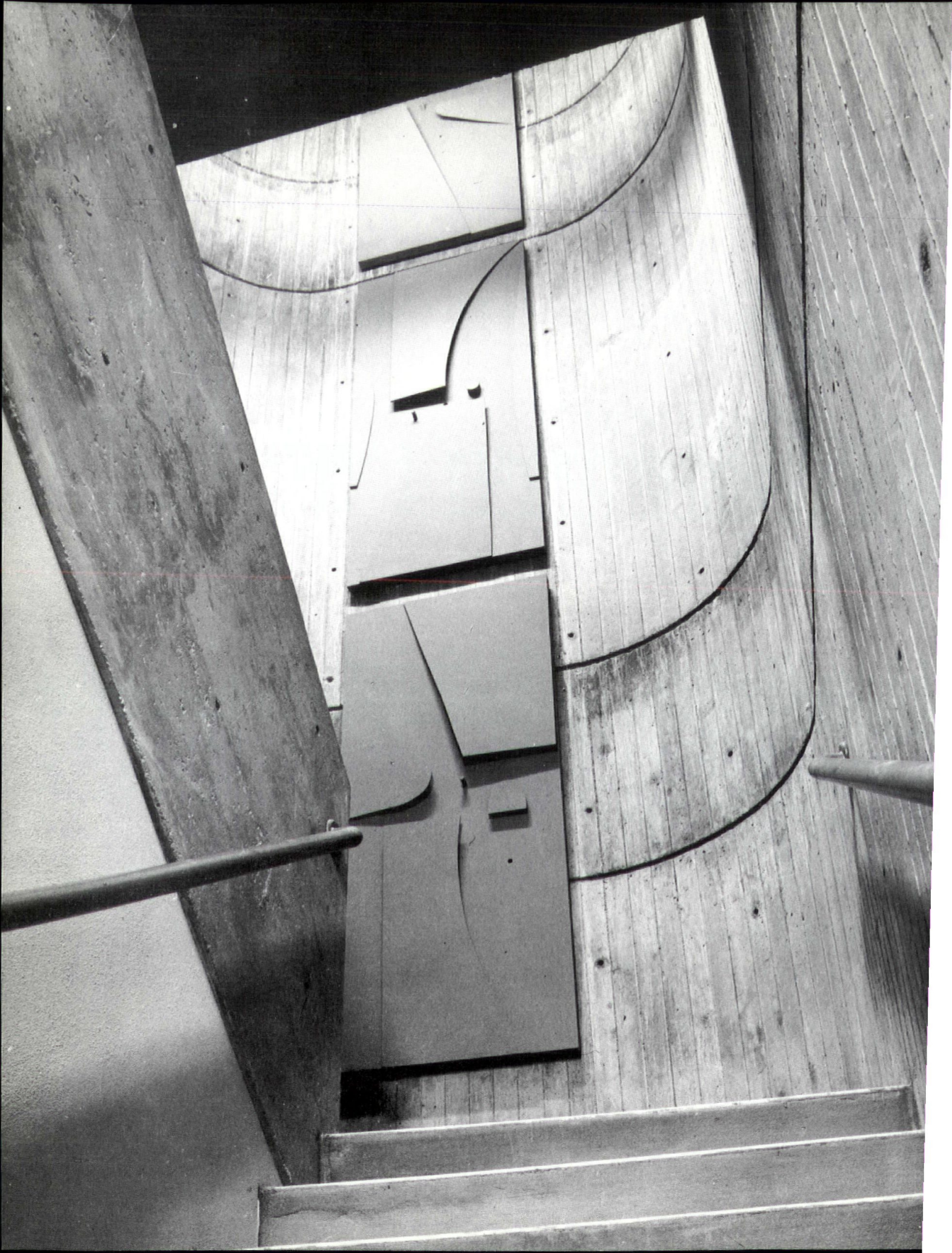
DALLAS

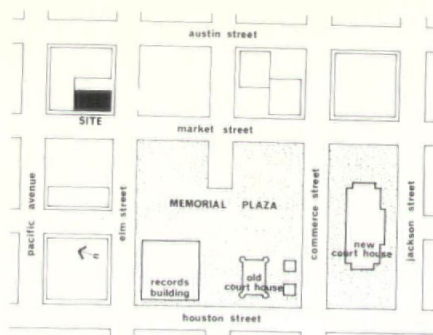
General Contractor: Avery Mays Construction Co.

Structural Engineer: Robert L. Rolfe

Mechanical Engineer: George G. Gentry & Simon, Inc.

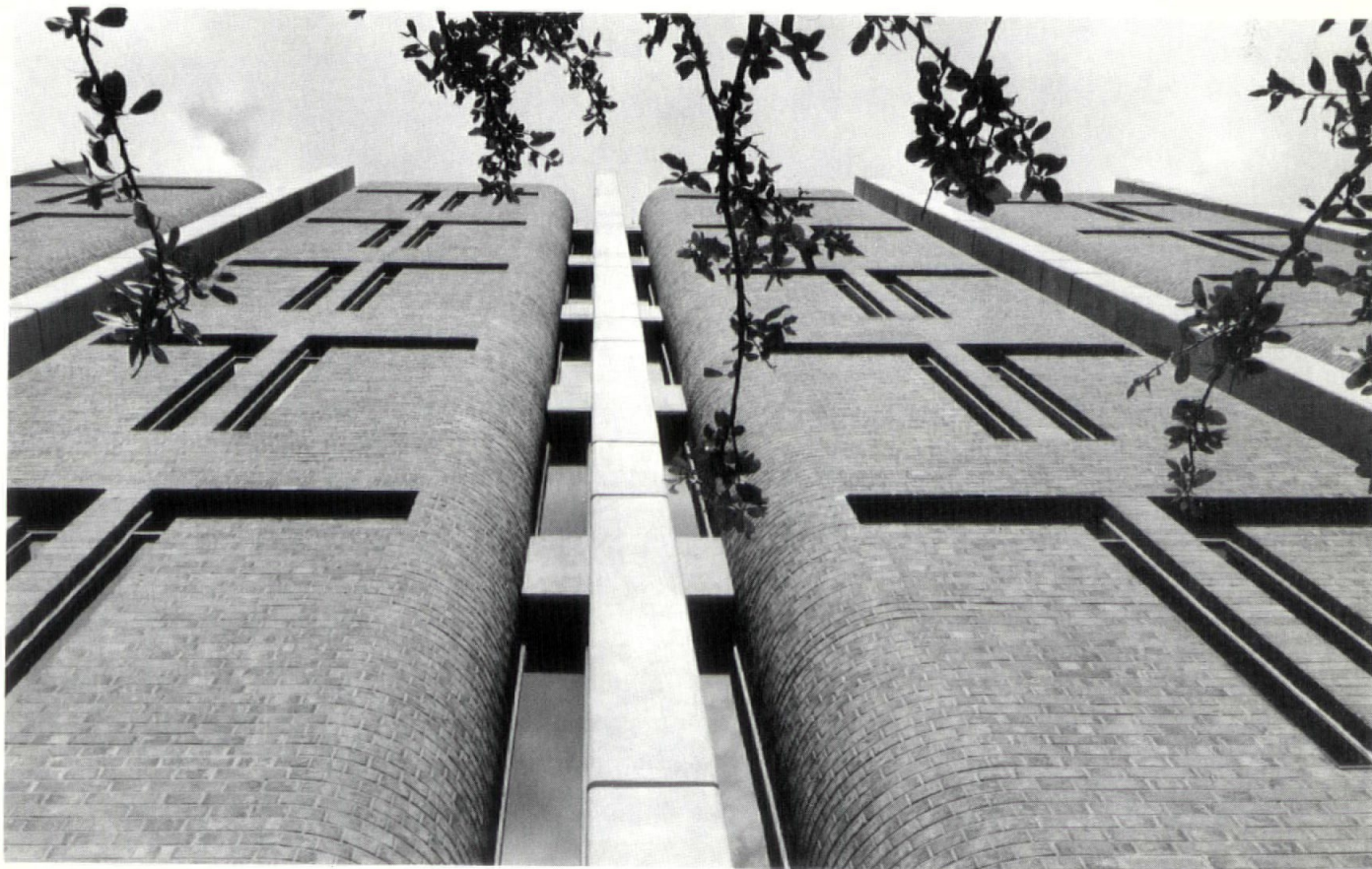
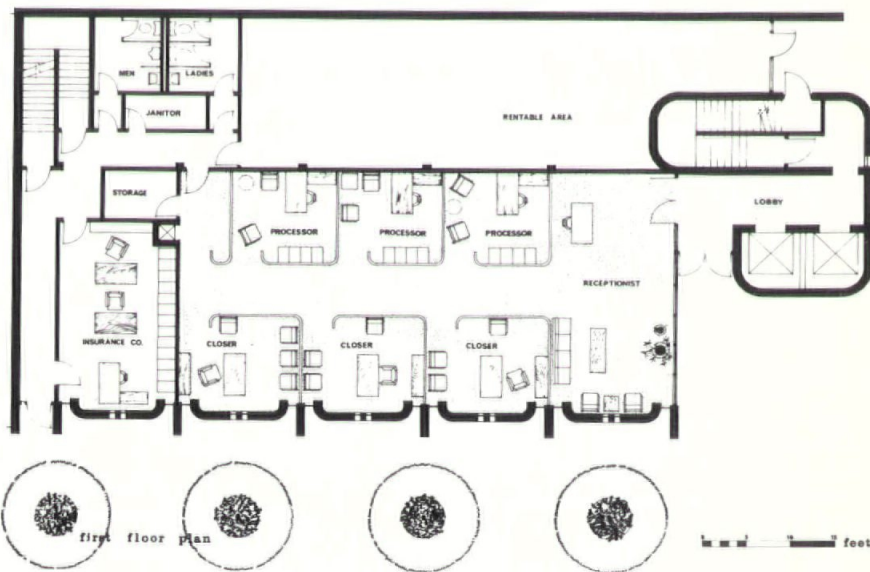


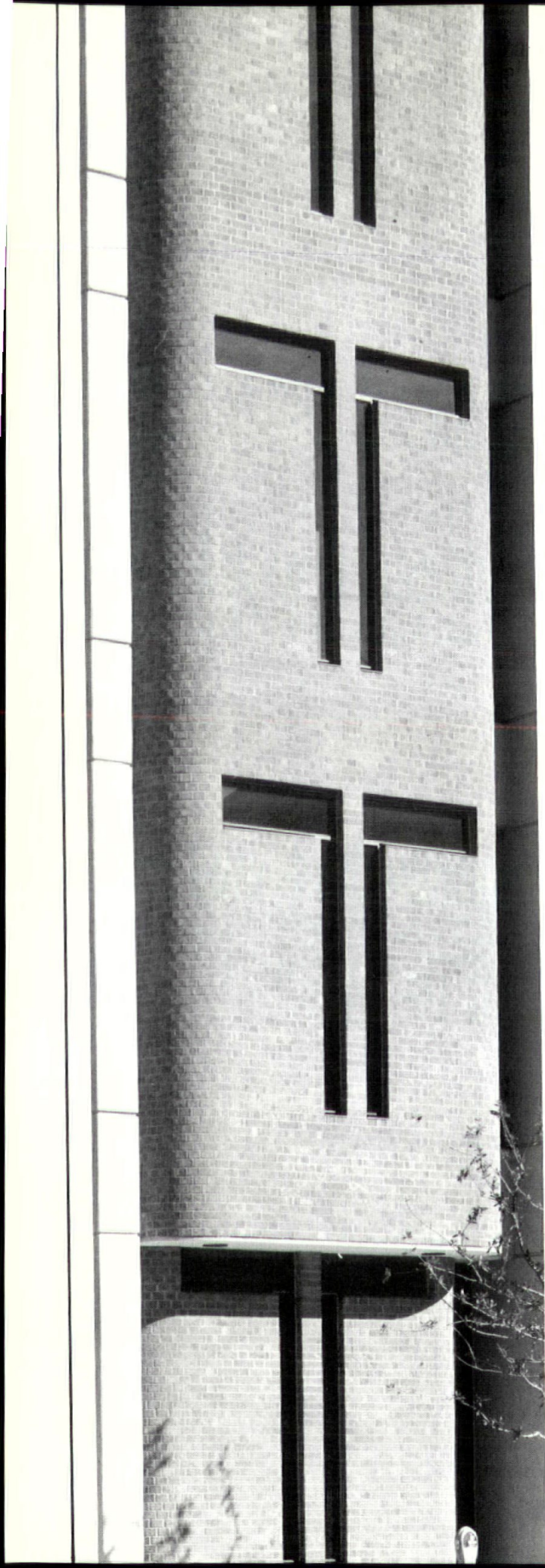




The site is diagonally opposite the proposed John F. Kennedy Memorial Plaza, dedicated to the late President. Fronting the public square are county municipal buildings. Since the title business is oriented to the county records, and since the square will be the only open space in downtown Dallas, the building is oriented through its corner diagonally across the street to the plaza.

The materials used for the building are an exposed concrete structure with curved brick infilling walls which leaves slits for light at the sides and ceiling of interior rooms. Choice and handling of materials reflects an attempt to avoid the manufactured slickness of curtain wall design with the commensurate "new to-day, old tomorrow" results. The building will seem to have been there always, and will age gracefully.







Because of the party wall in common with the existing structure to the north, and the possible building site to the east, the building is conceived not as free standing, but a part of the fabric of the street facade with the corner as a climax. ■



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS FELLOWSHIPS



The American Institute of Architects has announced the elevation of 82 of its members to the rank of Fellow, a lifetime honor bestowed for distinguished contribution to the profession. Advancement of the new Fellows will bring the total membership of the College of Fellows to 762, representing 3.8 percent of the corporate membership of the 19,000-member professional organization.



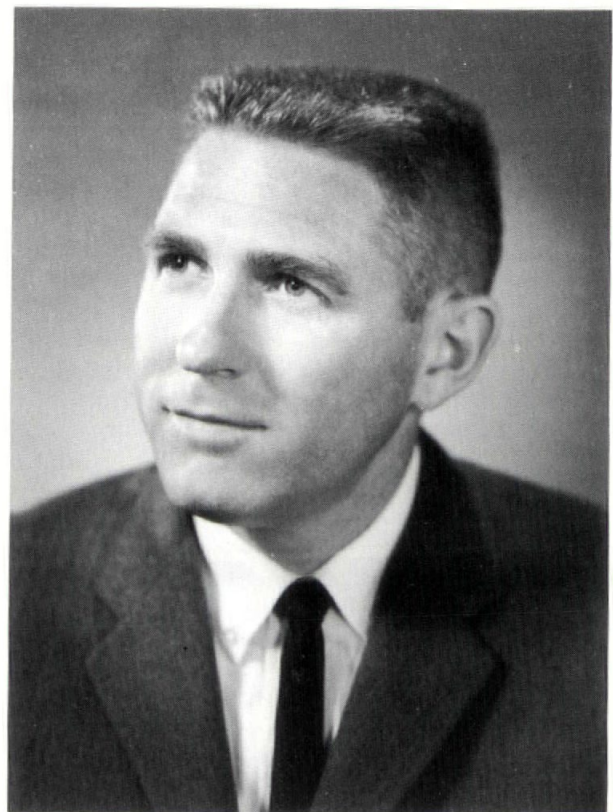
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THE CHALLENGE TO THE PROFESSION

THOMAS GRIFFITH

SENIOR EDITOR, TIME, INC.

Remarks to Twenty Seventh Annual Meeting
TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS



Preston Bolton was casting against type when he asked me, at this early hour of the morning, to rouse you with challenges. I don't even like the word. There used to be a fellow in our office much given to inspiring the rest of us, and as I sat doodling while being raked by his gunfire I used to wonder whether he could ever finish a sentence if denied the use of the words "exciting and Challenging". Given a dull prospect he would find it exciting; given a messy chore he would find it enabling as a challenge, and he could make progress seem positively unattractive by his relentless enthusiasm for it. I believe that challenge and opportunity are words used exclusively by people who eat \$5 two-hour lunches. You will find such words rarely used by men who order sandwiches to take out and drink their coffee out of paper cups.

But Preston Bolton is a very persuasive man and my job today is to talk to you about challenges. Your job is to hear me out, and as Adlai Stevenson used to say, I hope we both finish our work at about the same time.

I will ration myself to delivering two challenges to you. One is personal and pleasant, so I will save it for last. The other is public, and concerns the future of America's cities, and how much, if anything, the architect will have to do with it.

Americans have an odd way of ignoring a subject for a long time, then smothering it with attention. Our civic passions are apt to be passing ones. In the past five years we have enthusiastically discovered the plight of the cities. Our interest had many origins; traffic, rising costs, air pollution, the flight to the suburbs, the Negro problem. We re-discovered poverty, which we couldn't always see as we zoomed along the elevated highway above it. We were told that we must make a Great Society. And most surprising of all and most admirable of all, Lady Bird made it fashionable to care about preserving beauty . . . and thus has earned her own special niche as a First

Lady, alongside the Eleanor Roosevelt who went down into the coal mines, and the Jackie Kennedy who could talk real French with General DeGaulle. Beautification is a tough game, and requires more than hiding automobile junkyards from sight. What troubles us more than the old slums (which sometimes have an atmosphere about them), or the districts gone to seed, is our unending quest for creative new acts of uglification—the brutal roadway trash, the monotonous housing project. I wish it could be said that all of this had been done without benefit of architect.

It might seem to you that our current preoccupation with the city will also be a passing phenomenon. Isn't that the American Way? It usually takes a great deal of agitation, often synthetic and whooped up, to alert us to a problem. When we do come briefly awake, we instinctively throw a lot of money at the problem and tell it to go away.

But I think this time is different, and that our concern with the city is not going to go away. And one of the reasons it won't is what Patrick Maynihan has called the professionalism of reform. We now have people who *anticipate* problems, rather than simply respond to them. And though we are liable to mock the efforts of planners, and to deplore, as I do, the way they talk—the way they subject our language to the strain of such words as megalopolis and . . . they have also developed great sophisticated techniques for studying problems, detecting gaps and moving to fill them. As Maynihan points out, it wasn't the cries of the apathetic poor in Appalachia that focused attention on that region, but the discovery of its needs by men many hundreds of miles away who studied the statistics.

And the statistics that these men direct their attention to are also not going to go away. Between now and the year 2000 the number of Americans living in or near cities

will double. And we are told that 60 million new dwelling units (another fortunate phrase!) will be needed. This is twice that number built from the end of World War II to the present. And then add all that must go with these acres of new housing—the schools, the sewers, the transit systems, and you will see that the problem seekers are not about to be technologically unemployed.

All their ruminations have not yet produced a model plan for the spreading city, but I think it is safe to say that the old uncaring days are gone. Land near cities is too scarce and too precious to be left to the random spoilation of tract developers, the caprice of highway engineers and the absence of any rules. Let me give you one example. The population of the suburbs around Nashville, Tennessee has grown in the past two decades to 240,000 people but without there being any sewer system, which is now being installed at great expense. This sort of after-the-fact "insertion" of public facilities into unplanned sprawling communities, says the National League of Cities "will cost property owners three to five times as much in the long run as development properly planned and served from the beginning." I believe that this kind of logic will in the end prevail! Our minds already accept it; we just haven't gotten around to acting. The new breed of problem men doesn't make direct speeches about selfish interests, he analyses the facts and proposes his remedies, and assumes that the facts will speak for themselves to others as they do to him. Sometimes, he even talks as if statistics will repeal the national political processes. I don't think that they will, and that the grubby but essential conflict of personal interests will surface at another level. But this will be some gain.

What disturbs me more is that in the planning and codifying and guidelining that is bound to come—and that will have such effect on our cities and their surroundings—I don't hear much talk about architects. Two years ago I went down to a conference at Princeton where the Ford Foundation had gathered together planners, designers and architects. I assumed, as perhaps the Ford Foundation did too, that they would have much in common. They didn't. The architects regard the planners as ruthless fellows in love with numbers and bulldozers. And the planners as much as said that architects are men without any community sense, who build individual components to their own vanity.

All this seems a long way from that handsome chart which your society has put out, in which technology, special need and commercial opportunity are little augmented wedges in a world where the architect sits in the center with—and I quote—"All radiating from him and being directed by him."

Of late a new expression has been bandied about—the *de novo* city, which appeals to visionaries who are either bored with, or appalled by, trying to fix up the existing city. One man deeply interested in the *de novo* city is Roy Ash, who can hardly be regarded as impractical since he is the head of that remarkable business success story, Litton Industries an enterprise which in the past ten years has grown from a \$9 million to a \$900 million

dollar business. He thinks the existing city's problems are just interlocked to solve any of them. This is what he recently told *Fortune Magazine*: "We'll create new cities. All you have to do is fly over the country to see square mile after square mile where you could quite well set down a whole new city. There is no reason why you can't take 200 square miles some place that has the natural resources, which means primarily water, and even the water problem can be solved separately if it has to be—and create an ideal city with solutions for all those urban problems before it's even built."

"By 1970 we think that we'll be able to build a city that is adequate for 25,000 and has prospects of growing to 500,000. By 1990 we will be designing cities for a million people with the prospect of growing to five million." Does this sound far away from Texas and from Texas habits of thought? Then let me remind you that in Houston you have the fastest growing city in the United States, and that the practical inspiration for Ash's vision is the techniques that have been developed in that basically Texas institution, the space program. Or, as Ash says, "The systems management work involved in getting a one-million population city in business overnight is probably more sophisticated, and requires more professional disciplines, than the work required to get to the moon. When we decided to go to the moon, we found we had to create new kinds of professional capabilities, specializations that hadn't even existed. I think that the *de novo* city will lead to an entire new wave of specializations."

It sounds as if Mr. Ash might make room for a tame architect somewhere down the hall, to finalize his plans. There is another model, which I must prefer. This is the plan to revamp Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington. As you all know, Owing's Pennsylvania Avenue Commission, in preparing its bold solution, reckoned in all such factors as traffic flow, population density and business needs, but it made its central concern the aesthetic unity of a street which should match the grandeur of great capitol avenues round the world. Better than anyone else, I think architects know that true beauty is not arrived by tacking on or gussying up.

It is the eye of the architect—that visual concern for setting, for flow, for movement and serenity—that is missing in most of the unimaginative futuramas we are shown today. I don't know whether Civic Architect is one of the new job specializations Roy Ash expects to employ in that *de novo* city of his. I know only that the job hardly exists today, and that most new buildings may make a gentle bow to their immediate neighbors but rarely consider their entire surroundings, and perhaps this is why European cities—and I think a great many American ones as well—felt that the centers of American cities lack distinction, variety and beauty. So many are merely flat grids in which buildings and parking lots alternate at random, responsive only to greed and whim.

I recently vacationed in northern Italy, journeying through all those cities with the Cole Porter sounding names—each 30 or 40 miles apart, but unmistakably



THE CHALLENGE TO THE PROFESSION

stamped with its own character. I know it is unfair to reproach America for its lack of centuries; to blame it for not having the faith or the master masons to build great cathedrals; and unfair to expect chaotic democracies to imitate the unifying tyranny of Renaissance rulers who were often at the same time inspired patrons and great cut-throats.

It was not so much the majesty of the individual buildings of Northern Italy, that I remember, as the way quite modest buildings added to the general harmony, so that public squares became such pleasures to walk through. It may be that we as a people are no longer walkers because there is so little worth slowing down to see. I don't think we can beautify cities all at once; such perfectionist appeals overwhelm us and make us despair. But I think that much can be done to give character to that center part of any American city which the accident of settlement, the trend of commerce or the placing of civic buildings has made a natural gathering place. I wish architects in their own cities—your own cities—could be heard from more in the design of such settings, that will in time unfold to plan.

The role of the architect in the community must involve more than putting up a new post office, on a site you did not choose, with all the latest mail sorting devices and a few Greek motifs set out front.

I don't know how this greater participation will come about. I suspect many of you have the old army sergeant's wisdom, never volunteer. It may be that your society must do more, to make architects available for a tour of duty, in the planning of your city's and your region's future—men summoned as citizens but serving as architects. Perhaps architecture deserves its own part-time civic peace corps. If not you, who in the community is better fitted to have an appreciative eye for the look of the open spaces and a care for the shapes of closed spaces?

Let us now turn from the architect in society to the architect as architect, a much pleasanter subject, and let me try to fit architecture among its sisterly arts, as a journalist sees them. In doing so, in trying to say which of the arts are lively and which are less so, I must acknowledge that journalists are a kind of first audience and perhaps better guides to what will gain popular acceptance than they are at sizing up what may have intrinsic merit without immediate appeal.

But if you will allow me these disclaimers, I would say that America is building a great many museums and cultural centers these days, without sufficient paintings of quality to fill them, or professionalism in performance to match the magnificence, or at least the expense, of their

stage settings. It might be said that we are going through a phase of cultural dissemination and that creativity will come later. I would hate to agree with that critic who said that "Lincoln Center is what America produces instead of art."

We hear much about the quality of American life. Art is new big business. We had that remarkable post war flowering of painting called abstract expressionism, which for a time shifted the art capital of the world from Paris to New York, but the op and pop art that followed seem to me to be primarily commercial intention, and we can be grateful for those other artists who pursue their own bent instead of mimicking every trend, and we can be grateful for stubborn others like Andrew Wyeth who make us accept their own private visions, as the good ones always do. The Broadway theatre is moribund, expensive in cost and bankrupt in ideas. Commercial television programming has largely been abandoned to adolescents of all ages, including sports lovers (and I speak as a New York Giants Fan). We have seen first rate novelists though no great ones, unless Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud are in the process of becoming so. In music—has any new opera entered the permanent repertory in the past 50 years? We have composers who have moved beyond Stravinski and Webern, and whose interests are more cerebral than melodic. Most of us find a little of it therapeutic but a lot of it is deafening. We can hope that, as has happened in the past, what one generation finds harsh and impalatable, a later generation may find accessible and beautiful.

We come now to architecture. I think you are the lucky ones, and that you are living in a time of a great expansion of possibilities. I have often heard colleagues and friends from *Architectural Forum* speak of the old days, of that period when even the great ones of the profession, in the prime of their careers, could not get commissions, and of how Howard Myers used to stage contests to design ideal churches, schools or homes, partly to fill the pages of his magazine, but also as a way to provide prize money to architects who were scratching along. Some of you in this audience may turn down more work in one year than Frank Lloyd Wright used to get.

It seems to me that architects live now at a moment of happy confluence—of jobs to be done, of colleges and cities and homes and factories to be built; of newly developed materials and techniques to work with, that stretch the imagination rather than limit it; of patrons receptive to the new and with money ready to spend; and of a generation of architects capable of using these opportunities.

I know that it is possible to speak of contemporary architecture in a more critical and disparaging way—to say that the international style has had its day, and lent itself too easily to repetitious clichés; that we now oscillate between the brutal and the lazy, and have not found a style. I personally would rather work at a time when a new consolidation has not yet been won, when the range of possibilities has not yet been explored or exhausted. You live at a marvelous moment and I envy you. ■

LEMMON PARK EAST

ARCHITECTS:

WOODWARD CAPE & ASSOCIATES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:

H. DON HEYN

GENERAL CONTRACTORS:

COKER BROTHERS CONSTRUCTION CO.

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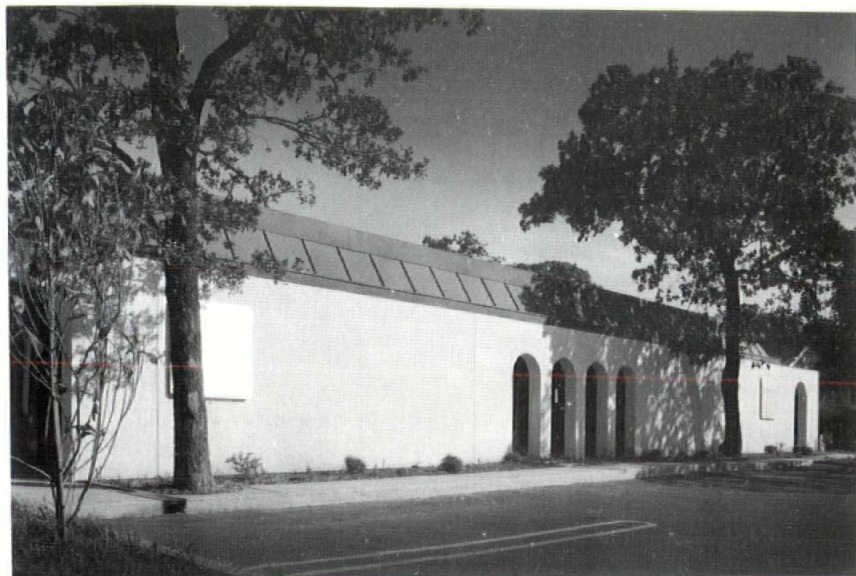
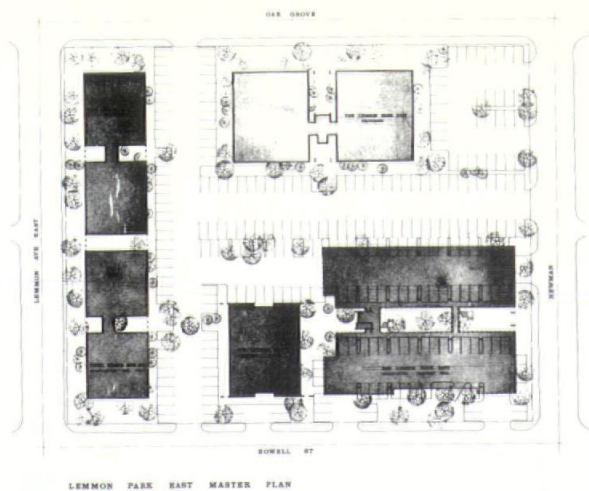
Lemmon Park East is an office community on the fringe of the central business district, well located with a freeway on the east, and a major thoroughfare on the west. The present environment is in transition from old-slum dwellings to newer office and commercial buildings. The land possesses the visual asset of many fine old-oak trees. The trees, plus the desire to provide and escape from the usual hubub of urban activity, suggested a restful-garden atmosphere; therefore, considerable effort was made to save and plan around the existing trees.





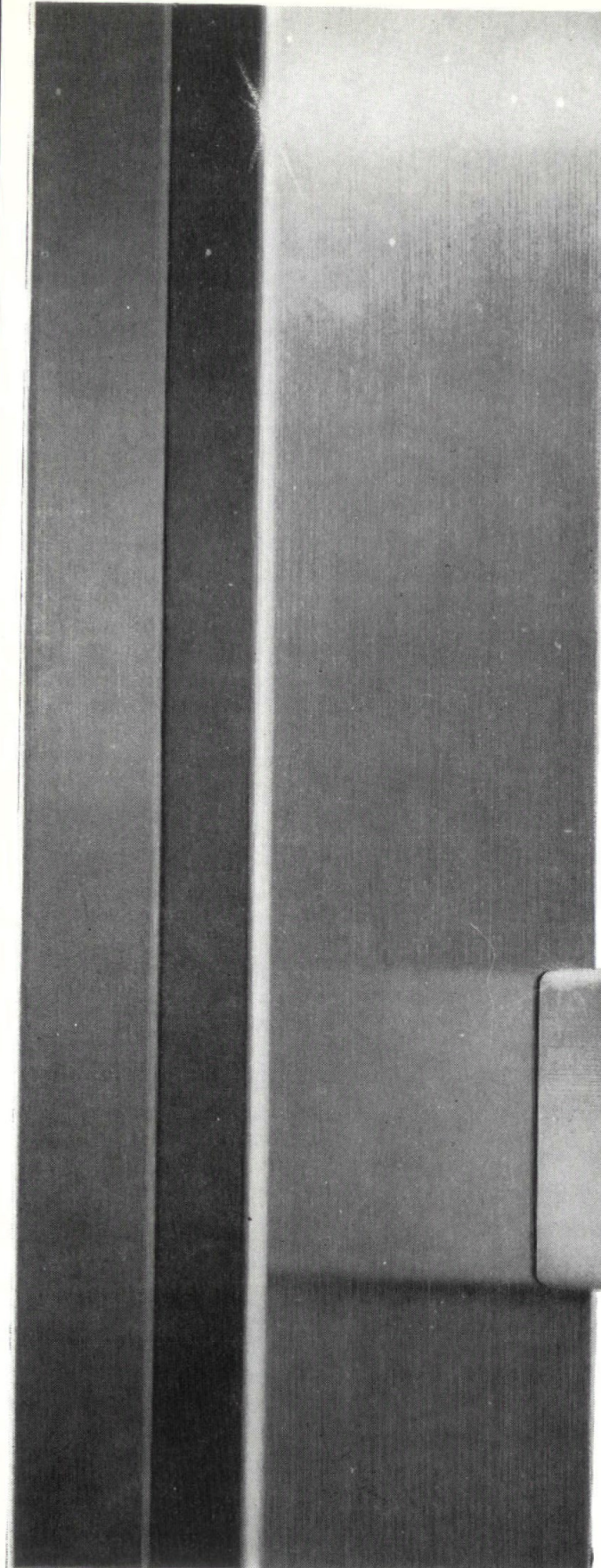
The palette of colors and materials is subdued. Lightly stained redwood screens and window mullions are warmer and more appropriate to the atmosphere than the usual aluminum. Stark-white stucco, heavily textured, provides a counterpoint to the trees and greenery in the spring and summer. A complete change takes place in the fall and winter. The pattern of light and shade is particularly wonderful when the leaves are gone and the shadows form the tracery of the limbs and redwood screens are cast upon the building. The visible roofing material is standing seam sheet metal, painted charcoal brown.





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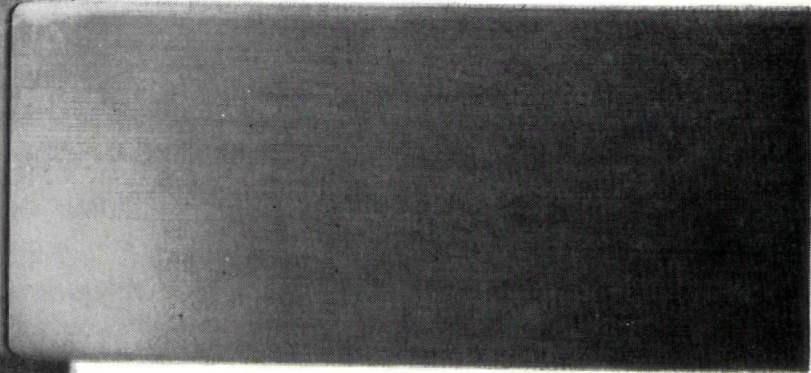
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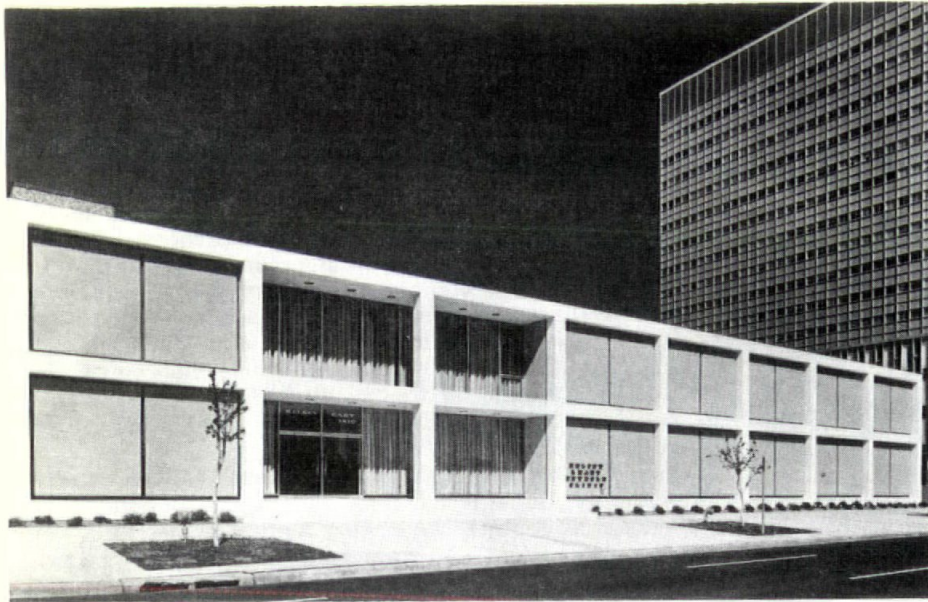
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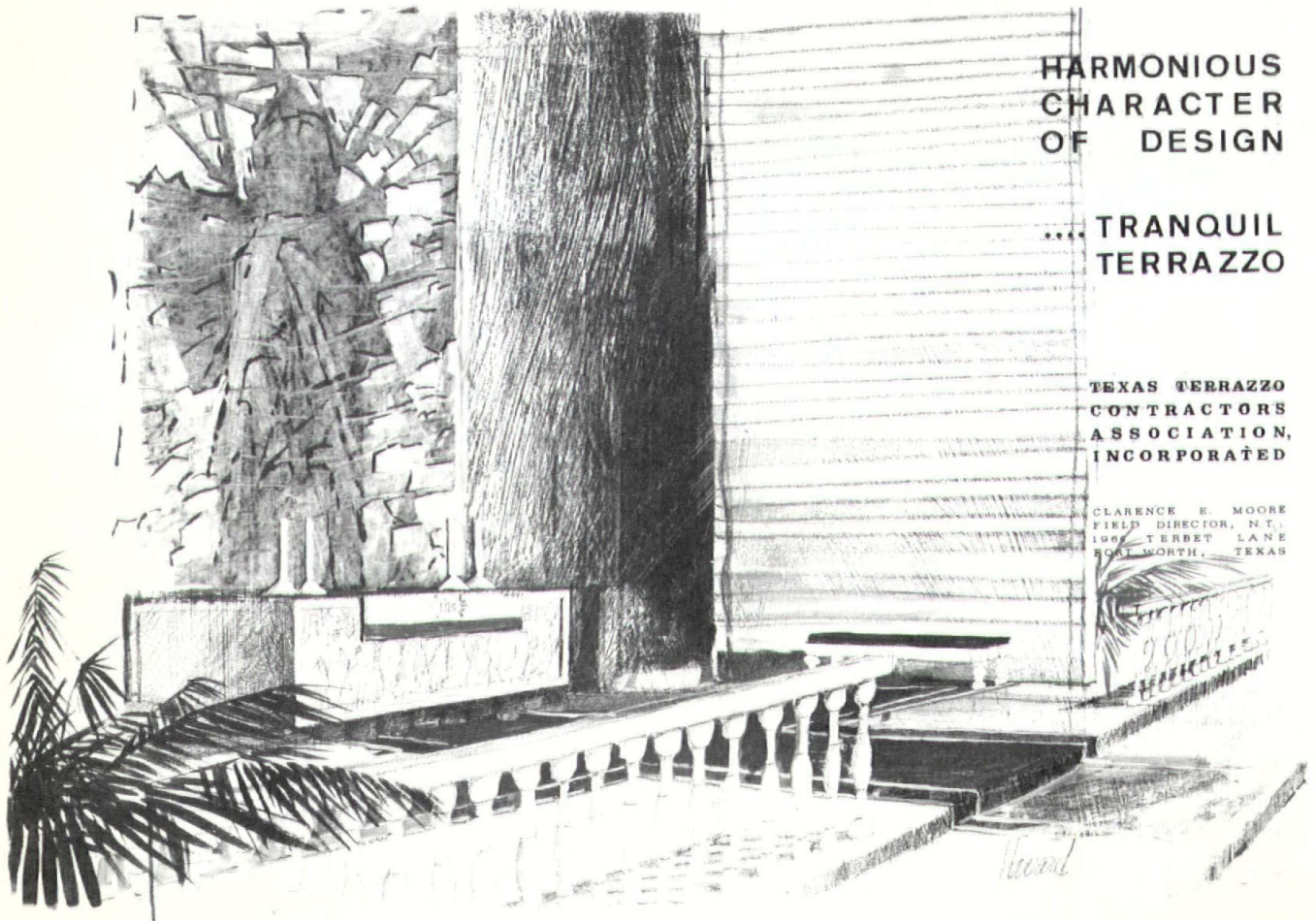


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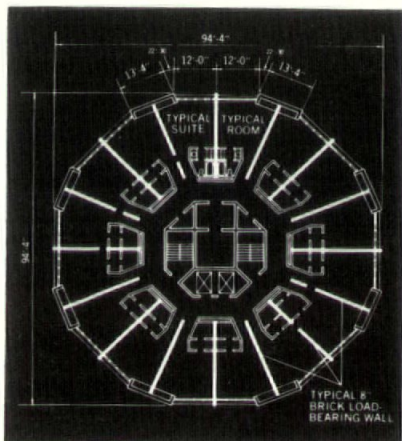
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HUD

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Secretary Robert C. Weaver, U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has appointed seven Regional Advisory Committees on Design and Planning. With this action, each of the HUD Regional Offices will have the services of four distinguished representatives of the design professions—an architect, a landscape architect, a planner, and an engineer.

HUD ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR REGION V's EIGHT SOUTHWEST STATES:

E. G. Hamilton, AIA

Partner, Harrell & Hamilton, architectural and urban design firm with many award winning urban projects to their credit. Member, AIA Committee on Urban Design.

Samuel B. Zisman, AIP

Planning consultant. Has written extensively on urban design and has lectured throughout the United States on the subject.

Robert M. O'Donnell, ASLA

President, Harman, O'Donnell and Henninger Associates, Inc. Firm served as technical advisers in preparation of "New Approaches to Residential Land Development, a Study of New Concepts and Innovations," sponsored by Urban Land Institute and National Association of Home Builders.

T. Carr Forrest, Jr., NSPE, ASCE

President, Forrest & Cotton, Incorporated. Firm has carried out municipal, reclamation, drainage, water supply and sanitary engineering assignments as well as industrial planning.

"The broad objectives of our committee is to help improve the design and planning capability of our HUD field offices," said HUD Regional Administrator W. W. Collins of Fort Worth, who will act as Chairman of the Regional Advisory Committee. "The Committee should also play a key role in the new Model Cities program with its mandate for a more sensitive approach to the social and aesthetic aspects of city renewal and development," he said.

George T. Rockrise, Fellow, American Institute of Architects, San Francisco architect, who is Adviser to Secretary Weaver for Design, pointed out that architects, urban designers, planners and engineers are now needed by America's burgeoning cities with an urgency not anticipated 25 years ago. "We intend to inspire more design professionals to bring their best talents, skills, and ideas into the Federal programs of urban development," he said. "We hope to transform their concerns into more direct impact on the Federal, state, and local people who are rebuilding our cities."

At the request of the Regional Administrator, the Committee will advise on ways to encourage and give recognition to good design on a continuing basis in all HUD programs. Among other things, this may include the organization of regional design conferences and seminars of leading design professionals and HUD officials.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

ALAN Y. TANIGUCHI

Alan Y. Taniguchi, who has been described by Fortune magazine as one of 16 "bright young men with designs on the future," will become director of The University of Texas School of Architecture on Sept. 1.

Mr. Taniguchi, a member of the UT architecture faculty since 1961, will succeed Philip D. Creer, who is returning to full-time teaching. Mr. Creer has been architecture director since 1956.

Announcement of Mr. Taniguchi's appointment was made by Chairman Frank C. Erwin, Jr., of the UT System Board of Regents and Chancellor Harry Ransom.

Dr. Ransom said of the appointment: "The faculty committee which recommended Mr. Taniguchi's appointment as director of the School of Architecture is to be commended for nominating a man who has a distinguished career in two professions, architecture and teaching.

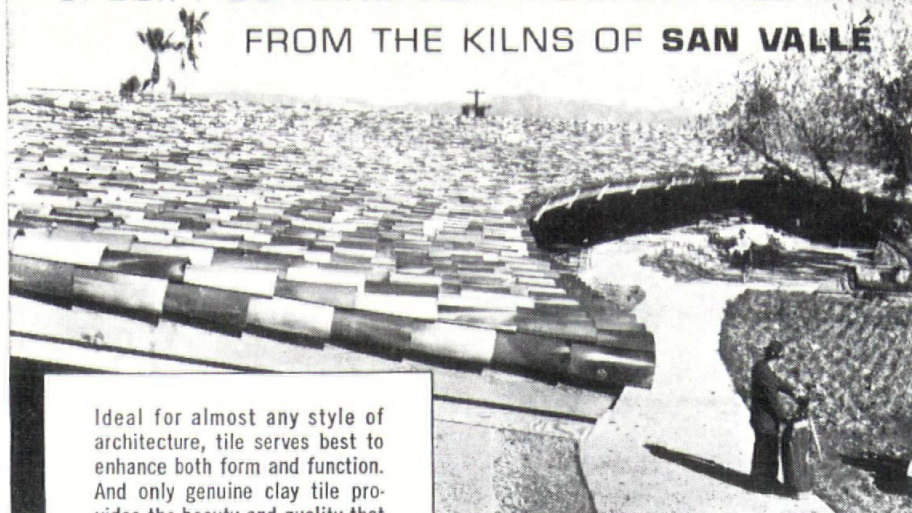
"During his six years at the University, Mr. Taniguchi has demonstrated that a creative career as a practicing architect can be combined successfully with a deep concern for students and teaching. By their action, his colleagues have endorsed both Mr. Taniguchi and the interdependence of teaching and research."

Mr. Taniguchi, who has received two teaching excellence awards from the Students' Association, came to the University from Harlingen, where he was a practicing architect for nine years.

A visiting critic at a number of other university architecture schools and departments, Mr. Taniguchi also has served on juries for several architectural competitions.

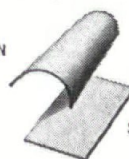
His designs have won awards from the Texas Society of Architects.

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Following recent setbacks in Johnson Administration plans for urban and highway beautification, that statement was made by J. Gordon Lippincott, board chairman of Lippincott & Margulies Inc., communications, marketing and design consultant firm, when he called for ad industry self-discipline at the Art Directors Club 12th annual communications conference in New York's Americana Hotel.

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